



Thomas and Thomas

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In the *Students for Fair Admissions* decision, the Supreme Court [rules](#) that using race as a criterion of university admissions is unconstitutional.

Ambiguous aspects of the decision and the [determination of some universities](#) to keep using race as a criterion mean that qualified applicants may, alas, still be penalized for being the “wrong” color. Unambiguous, though, is Justice Clarence Thomas’s [rebuttal of the decision’s dissenters](#) for, among other things, assuming that only racism can explain the different average outcomes of ethnic groups.

“[N]one of those statistics are capable of drawing a direct causal link between race — rather than socioeconomic status or any other factor — and individual outcomes. So Justice Jackson supplies the

link herself: the legacy of slavery and the nature of inherited wealth. This, she claims, locks blacks into a seemingly perpetual inferior caste. Such a view is irrational; it is an insult to individual achievement and cancerous to young minds. . . .”

Has Thomas been perusing the [work of Thomas Sowell](#)?

One of Sowell’s career-integrating insights is that statistics summarizing differences in average group outcomes are mute about the causes.

One must *investigate* causally relevant facts.

Consider, for example, differences in characteristics and outcomes between subgroups of a broader ethnic group. Sole possible cause: racism? Or the fact that Asians on average perform better than whites in certain academic or economic categories. Sole possible cause: racism?

Just two of many pertinent questions that Dr. Sowell has asked as he, in his numerous books, surveyed our world’s cultures, lands, and histories.

This is Common Sense. I’m Paul Jacob.